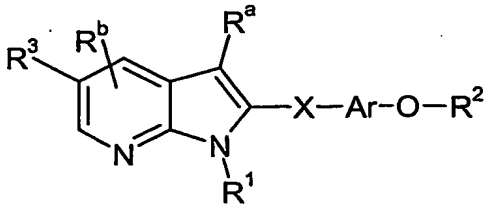
What is claimed is:

1. A compound of formula I or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



I

wherein

R^1 is a C_{1-12} group;

X is a C_{1-10} divalent group that separates groups connected thereto by one or two saturated carbons;

Ar is C_{4-12} divalent aromatic group;

R^2 is optionally substituted C_{1-6}hydrocarbyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^3 is a C_{1-12} group, wherein the atom of R^3 that is directly connected to the six-membered ring of formula I is a nitrogen, or an unsaturated carbon, wherein the unsaturated carbon is connected to an oxyen through a double bond; and

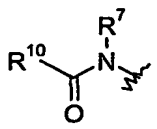
R^a and R^b are -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, or -NRC(=O)R, wherein R is independently –H or C_{1-6} hydrocarbyl.

2. A compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

R^1 is optionally substituted C_{1-10} hydrocarbyl; optionally substituted C_{1-10}acyl; optionally substituted C_{4-8}heteroaryl-C(=O)-; R^4R^5N-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; R^4O-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4OC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)NR^4$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4CSO_2N(R^5)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; and C_{1-10}hydrocarbylamino;

wherein R^4, R^5 and R^6 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, or a divalent C_{1-6}group that together with another divalent C_{1-6}group forms a portion of a ring;

R^3 is selected from: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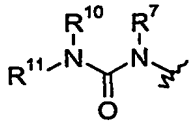
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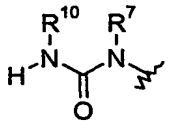
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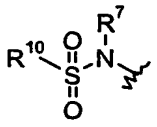
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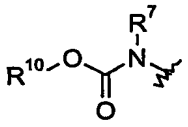
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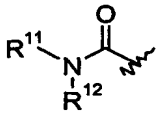
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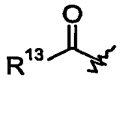
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wherein

R^7 is selected from -H, optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12} and R^{13} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl; and

R^a and R^b are hydrogen.

3. A compound as claimed claim 1,

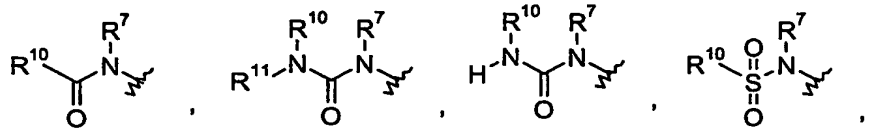
wherein R^1 is selected from C_{1-8}alkyl; C_{2-8}alkenyl; C_{2-8} alkynyl; optionally subsituted aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC_{1-6}$alkyl; R^4OC_{1-6}alkyl; C_{3-6}cycloalkyl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkyl-C_{1-6}alkyl; C_{1-6}alkylC_{6-8}aryl; C_{1-6}alkyl-C(=O)-; C_{6-8}aryl-C(=O)-; C_{3-8}heteroaryl-C(=O)-; or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl-C_{1-6}alkyl;

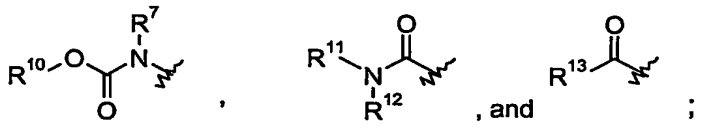
wherein R^2 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkyl substituted by at least one fluorine, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl substituted by at least one fluorine, C_{2-6}alkynyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl substituted by at least one fluorine, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, and optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^4, R^5 and R^6 are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, and a divalent C_{1-6}group that together with another divalent C_{1-6}group forms a portion of a ring;

X is selected from the group consisting of –NR^6-, -CH_2-CH_2-, -CH=CH-, -O-, -$C(R^8)(R^9)$-, and -$S(O)_q$-, wherein q is 0, 1 or 2, wherein R^8 and R^9 are independently C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, -OH, or -H; at most one of R_8 and R_9 is –OH;

R^3 is selected from:





wherein

R^7 is selected from -H, optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12} and R^{13} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl; and

R^a and R^b are hydrogen.

4. A compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein

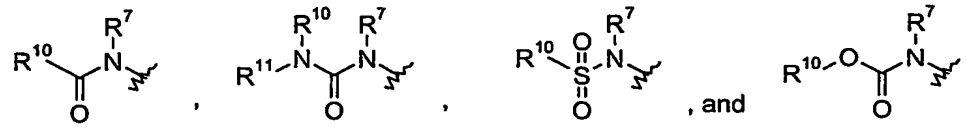
R^1 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl; C_{2-6}alkenyl; C_{2-6} alkynyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkylmethyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkylmethyl;

X is –CH_2-;

Ar is phenylene or pyridylene;

R^2 is selected from -CH_3, -CH_2CH_3, -$CH(CH_3)_2$, -CH_2CF_3, CF_3, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, pyridyl and phenyl; and

R^3 is selected from



wherein, R^7 is selected from -H and methyl; R^{10} and R^{11} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted

C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl.

5. A compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein

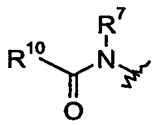
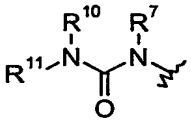
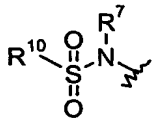
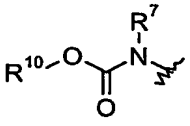
R^1 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl; C_{2-6}alkenyl; C_{2-6} alkynyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkylmethyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkylmethyl;

X is $-CH_2-$;

Ar is selected from the group consisting of an optionally substituted *para*-arylene; an optionally substituted a six-membered *para*-heteroarylene;

R^2 is selected from $-CH_3$, $-CH_2CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-CH_2CF_3$, CF_3, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, pyridyl and phenyl; and

R^3 is selected from:


, 
, 
, and 
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wherein, R^7 is selected from -H and methyl; R^{10} and R^{11} are selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl.

6. A compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein

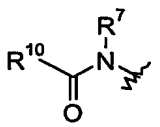
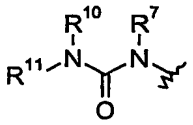
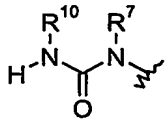
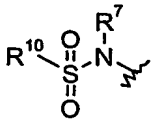
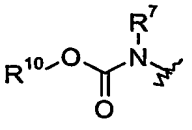
R^1 is selected from optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkylmethyl; and optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkylmethyl;

X is $-CH_2-$;

Ar is *para*-phenylene or *para*-pyridylene;

R^2 is methyl, or ethyl; and

R^3 is selected from


, 
, 
, 
, and 
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wherein, R^7 is selected from -H and methyl; R^{10} and R^{11} are selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cylcoalkyl, phenyl optionally substituted with halogen, nitro, C_{1-3}alkyl, $-COOR^{14}$, -OH,

cyano, trifluormethyl, C_{1-3}alkyloxy; C_{3-6}heteroaryl optionally substituted with halogen, nitro, C_{1-3}alkyl, -$COOR^{14}$, -OH, cyano, trifluormethyl, C_{1-3}alkyloxy, wherein R^{14} is a C_{1-3}alkyl.

7. A compound selected from:

1) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,2-dimethyl-propanamide;
2) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,2-dimethyl-propanamide;
3) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-*N*'-(1-methylethyl)-urea;
4) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,3-dimethyl-butanamide;
5) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,2-dimethyl-propanamide;
6) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-cyclopropanecarboxamide;
7) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,2,2-trimethyl-propanamide;
8) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*',*N*'-diethyl-*N*-methyl-urea;
9) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,5-dimethyl-3-isoxazolecarboxamide;
10) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2-fluoro-*N*-methyl-benzamide;
11) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,2-dimethyl-propanamide;
12) [1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-, 1-methylethyl ester carbamic acid;
13) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,2,2-trimethyl-propanamide;
14) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,3-dimethyl-butanamide;

15) *N*-[1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-*N'*-(1-methylethyl)-urea;

16) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,2-dimethyl-propanamide;

17) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,6-difluoro-*N*-methyl-benzenesulfonamide;

18) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-cyclobutanecarboxamide;

19) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,5-difluoro-*N*-methyl-benzamide;

20) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,2-dimethyl-propanamide;

21) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,2,2-trimethyl-propanamide;

22) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-*N'*-(1-methylethyl)-urea;

23) *N*-[2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,3-dimethyl-butanamide;

24) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,2-dimethyl-propanamide;

25) [1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-, methyl ester carbamic acid;

26) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-2,6-difluoro-*N*-methyl-benzenesulfonamide;

27) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-2-pyridinecarboxamide;

28) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,3-dimethyl-butanamide;

29) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-*N'*-(1-methylethyl)-urea;

30) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,1-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazole-5-sulfonamide;

31) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-4-(dimethylamino)-*N*-methyl- benzamide;

32) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*,5-dimethyl-3-isoxazolecarboxamide;

33) 4-[[[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]methylamino]sulfonyl]-benzoic acid;

34) *N*-[1-(cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-*b*]pyridin-5-yl]-*N*-methyl-2-nitro-benzenesulfonamide; and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

8. A compound according to any one of claims 1-7 for use as a medicament.

9. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-7 in the manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain.

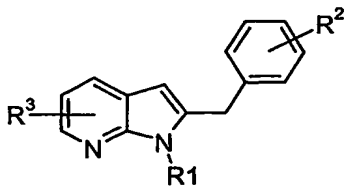
10. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-7 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of immune cancer.

11. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-7 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, Alzheimer's disease, anxiety disorders, gastrointestinal disorders or cardiovascular disorders.

12. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one of claims 1-7 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

13. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-7.

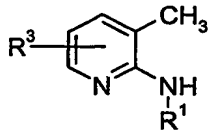
14. A method for preparing a compound of formula II,



II

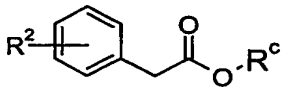
comprising the steps of

a) reacting a compound of formula III,



III ,

with a base having a pKa more than 20;



IV

b) reacting a product formed in step a) with a compound of formula IV, to form the compound of formula II,

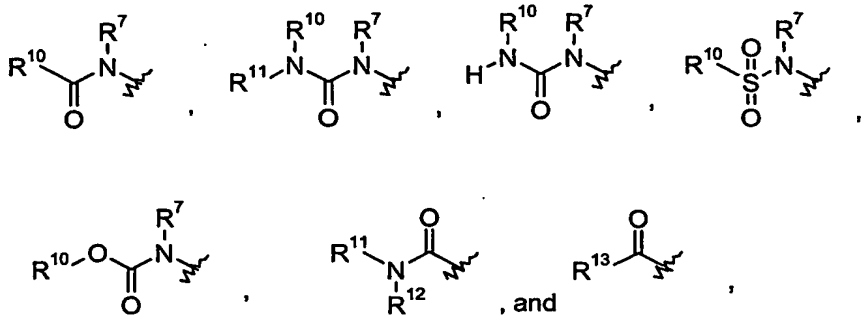
wherein

R^1 is optionally substituted C_{1-10} hydrocarbyl; optionally substituted C_{1-10}acyl; optionally substituted C_{4-8}heteroaryl-C(=O)-; R^4R^5N-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; R^4O-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4OC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)NR^4$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4CSO_2N(R^5)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; and C_{1-10}hydrocarbylamino;

wherein R^4, R^5 and R^6 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, or a divalent C_{1-6}group that together with another divalent C_{1-6}group forms a portion of a ring;

R^2 is optionally substituted C_{1-6}hydrocarbyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^3 is selected from:



wherein

R^7 is selected from -H, optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12} and R^{13} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl; and

R^c is C_{1-4}alkyl.

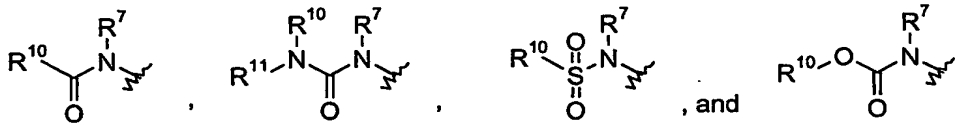
15. A process as claimed in claim 14, wherein

the base is t-butyl lithium;

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl; C_{2-6}alkenyl; C_{2-6} alkynyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkylmethyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkylmethyl;

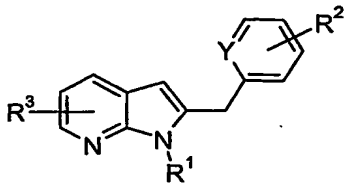
R^2 is selected from $-CH_3$, $-CH_2CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-CH_2CF_3$, CF_3, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, pyridyl and phenyl; and

R^3 is selected from:



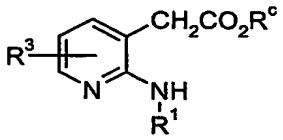
wherein, R^7 is selected from -H and methyl; R^{10} and R^{11} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl.

16. A process for preparing a compound of formula V,



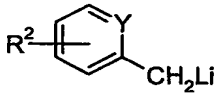
V

comprising the step of reacting a compound of formula VI,



VI

with a compound of formula VII,



VII ,

to form the compound of formula V,

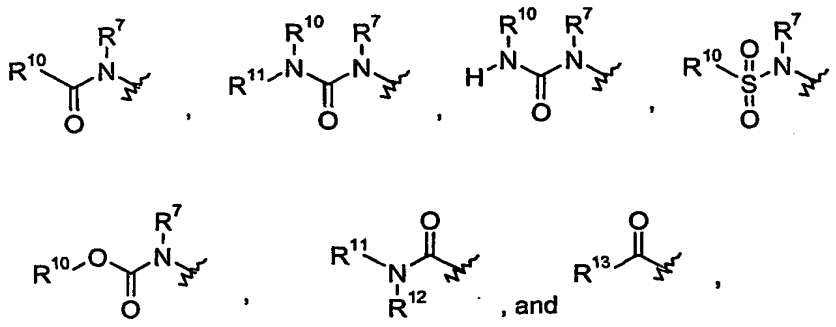
wherein

R^1 is optionally substituted C_{1-10} hydrocarbyl; optionally substituted C_{1-10}acyl; optionally substituted C_{4-8}heteroaryl-C(=O)-; R^4R^5N-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; R^4O-C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^4OC(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4C(=O)NR^4$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4CSO_2N(R^5)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NC(=O)N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; $R^4R^5NSO_2N(R^6)$-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted aryl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C_{1-6}alkyl; optionally substituted heterocyclyl-C(=O)-C_{1-6}alkyl; and C_{1-10}hydrocarbylamino;

wherein R^4, R^5 and R^6 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, or a divalent C_{1-6}group that together with another divalent C_{1-6}group forms a portion of a ring;

R^2 is optionally substituted C_{1-6}hydrocarbyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^3 is selected from:



wherein

R^7 is selected from -H, optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12} and R^{13} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl;

Y is CH or N; and

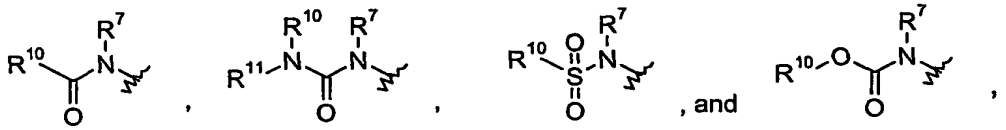
R^c is C_{1-4}alkyl.

17. A process as claimed in claim 16, wherein

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl; C_{2-6}alkenyl; C_{2-6} alkynyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkylmethyl; optionally substituted C_{3-6}heterocycloalkylmethyl;

R^2 is selected from $-CH_3$, $-CH_2CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-CH_2CF_3$, CF_3, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, pyridyl and phenyl; and

R^3 is selected from:



wherein, R^7 is selected from -H and methyl; R^{10} and R^{11} are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkenyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkynyl, optionally substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10} aryl, or optionally substituted C_{3-6}heteroaryl.